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ABSTRACT

This study investigated: (1) differences in disciplinary styles of full-time, part-time, and nonemployed mothers of older and younger children; and (2) interactive effects of maternal employment status and disciplinary styles on children's peer status. Participants were 144 mothers of 59 first graders and 85 fourth graders who responded to 6 hypothetical situations that would require them to discipline their child. Sociometric testing was conducted with the children. No differences in disciplinary styles were found to be functions of maternal employment status. Results indicated that mothers who were employed full-time tended to be more "power-assertive" with first-grade boys than were part-time and nonemployed mothers of first-grade boys. Maternal employment factors were not found to be directly related to children's peer status. These findings suggest that maternal employment factors may work in combination with disciplinary styles to produce differential effects for boys and girls. Full-time employed mothers who were more "power-assertive" tended to have boys who experienced more rejection by peers than boys of more "power-assertive" part-time and nonemployed mothers. Nonemployed mothers who were more "power-assertive" tended to have girls who experienced more rejection by their peers than girls of more "power-assertive" part-time and full-time employed mothers. (RH)

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Maternal Employment: Relations with Maternal Disciplinary Styles and Children's Peer Status

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to examine differences in maternal disciplinary styles and children's peer status based on whether the mother was employed full- time, part- time, or not employed outside the home. 144 mothers of 59 first- graders and 85 fourth- graders were interviewed over the summer and provided open-ended responses to six hypothetical situations that would require them to take disciplinary action with their child. Sociometric testing was then conducted with the children 6-7 weeks after school commenced in the fall.

Results indicated that mothers who were employed full- time tended to be less inductive (i.e., more power- assertive) with first- grade boys than were part- time and nonemployed mothers of first- grade boys. Additional findings indicated that full- time employed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have boys who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared to boys of more power- assertive part- time and non- employed mothers. However, nonemployed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have girls who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared to girls of more power- assertive part- time and full- time employed mothers.

MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT: RELATIONS WITH MATERNAL DISCIPLINARY STYLES AND CHILDREN'S PEER STATUS

As the number of women in the work force increases, so does concern over the effects of maternal employment. In 1964, 49% of women worked outside the home and also maintained families. This number has increased to 60.9% (U.S. Dept. of Census, 1986). It has been predicted that by 1995, 73% of mothers with children under 18 will be working outside the home (Hofferth & Phillips, 1987). This trend is important to those involved in developmental studies since factors in the environment and experiences of both parents and their children will likely impact on their behavior.

The majority of research exploring relationships between maternal employment and child outcome variables has focused on attachment (e.g., Belsky, 1988; Benn, 1986; Hock, 1980; Hoffman, 1982; Rutter, 1979), sex-role orientations (e.g., Gold & Andres, 1978, Hoffman, 1984), and cognitive development (e.g., Easterbrooks & Goldberg, 1985; Gold, Andres, & Glorieux, 1979; Lerner, Hess, & Tubman, 1987). However, little work has been directed toward understanding relationships between maternal employment and parenting behaviors that contribute to children's social competence with peers. The goal of the present research was to test the hypothesis that maternal employment factors are related to maternal disciplinary styles and that these factors work in combination with maternal disciplinary styles in ways that contribute to child competence with peers.

Recently, researchers have begun to move beyond exploring differences in children's behavior and developmental outcomes as a direct function of maternal employment toward investigating the processes by which maternal employment might influence child outcomes (e.g., Belsky, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, Alvarez, & Henderson, 1984; Hock, 1980; Lerner & Galambos,

1986). For instance, Belsky (1984) has included maternal employment in his process model as a variable that may affect and be affected by maternal personality. This model also suggests that maternal employment may influence parenting behavior with consequences for child outcomes. Along a similar vein, research indicates that maternal employment may work in combination with other factors such as maternal personality and anxiety to influence children's development. Findings from one such study suggest that mothers who were employed long hours were more anxious with their infants at 3 months of age. This anxiety was negatively related to the security of the child's attachment to the mother (Owen & Cox, 1989).

If it is the case that maternal employment works in combination with other factors such as anxiety to influence child outcomes, it would seem important to identify other factors as well. As many theorists have suggested, one possibility may be global child-rearing patterns (e.g., Berndt, 1983; Hoffman, 1982; Rutter, 1979). More specifically, this investigation focuses on maternal disciplinary styles. Although by no means conceptually nor empirically conclusive, several possibilities exist for describing the nature of the relationship between maternal employment and maternal disciplinary styles.

For instance, Bloom-Feshbach and Heller (1982) suggest, "As mothers deviate from traditional roles outside the home, it is not surprising that this child-rearing role may also change" (p.274). Several studies have shown that working mothers may experience stress in adapting to the dual roles imposed by the demands of home and work. Large scale surveys reveal that mothers who are employed report being under more stress and may be more tired and irritable than mothers who do not work outside the home (Booth, 1979; Pleck & Rustad, 1980). Hoffman (1982) adds that ". . . there is also evidence when maternal employment involves excessive strain from

the hassle of juggling two roles, effects may be disruptive for the family and child" (p.259) Such stress may lead to less inductive and more power-assertive disciplinary styles (e.g., the use of coercion, threats, and punishment rather than reasoning) due to the lack of time, energy, and patience.

Conversely, recent findings suggest that many nonemployed mothers experience more stress associated with lower self-esteem and less of a sense of competence than do mothers who are employed (see Hoffman, 1982). Such stress may also be related to more power-assertive disciplinary styles. As observational data in a study by Reis and Burton (1984) suggest, nonemployed mothers were prone to using more power assertive interaction patterns with their children when compared to employed mothers. However, it should be noted that although self-esteem and perceived competence were not directly assessed in this study, employed and nonemployed mothers in this sample did not differ in satisfaction with their roles.

Another view expressed by Desfosses and Bouchard (1987) suggests that the additional resources a mother brings into the family (in the case of a dual-earner family) may lead to an increased social standing and personal satisfaction that may be related to more inductive disciplinary strategies. Results of their research that was conducted with mothers of a broad age-range of children suggest that more hours of out-of-home employment were related to less power-assertive disciplinary strategy use reported by mothers. Similarly, Reis and Burton (1984) reported that employed mothers of second and fifth graders viewed themselves as being strong disciplinarians and interacted with their children in more of an "authoritative" manner (cf. Baumrind, 1971) in analogue situations when

compared to nonemployed mothers. An examination of the coding system revealed that these mothers reported and were observed using more reasoning rather than power assertion to control their children's behavior.

Somewhat contradictory, however, are findings from an earlier investigation by Yarrow, Scott, Leeuw, and Heinig (1962) indicating no differences in disciplinary styles for mothers of a broad age range of children who were employed versus those who were not. Likewise, a recent study conducted with preschool- age- children revealed no differences between employed and nonemployed mothers (and fathers) on power-assertive versus reasoning indices (Mills & Stevens, 1985). However, fathers whose wives worked were more permissive than those whose wives did not work (i.e., established fewer rules and expectations for child behavior). Alternatively, for fathers, Gold and Andries (1978) found that maternal employment was related to stronger perceptions of paternal power assertion by their preschool-age sons.

In general, data to this point suggest that maternal employment by itself is not adversely related to maternal disciplinary styles (see also Woods, 1972) and, as some studies suggest, may be positively related to the use of more inductive parenting practices for mothers. However, few studies in this literature have taken maternal work status (full-time, part-time, non employed) into account. Results of recent studies have indicated differences in child development outcomes for mothers who work full-time and part-time (Bronfenbrenner, Alvarez, & Henderson, 1984; Easterbrooks & Goldberg, 1985; Hoffman, 1982; McHale & Huston, 1984), although little has been done to investigate disciplinary styles in this regard. As Berndt (1983) suggests, differences in psychological adjustment associated with child- rearing practices may be confounded with whether the mother is employed part-time or full-time.

In addition to the paucity of research examining maternal employment status, little, if any work has been conducted to examine relations between maternal employment, maternal disciplinary styles, and child outcomes such as competence with peers. Although many studies have documented positive relations between inductive disciplinary styles and children's social developmental outcomes (e.g., Deutsch, 1974; Hart, Ladd, & Burleson, in press; Jennings, 1975), little is known concerning interactions between maternal employment, maternal disciplinary styles, and children's competency in the peer group.

The first purpose of the present study was to investigate whether there are differences in the disciplinary styles of full-time, part-time, and nonemployed mothers for older (fourth-graders) and younger (first graders) grade- school- age children. Due to the exploratory nature of this investigation, identifying processes (e.g., maternal stress, perceived competence, satisfaction) by which these relationships may occur was beyond the scope of this study. Based on results of some of the research reviewed earlier (particularly the Reis and Burton, 1984 study utilizing both questionaire and observational methodology), it was expected that higher levels of maternal employment would be positively related to more inductive disciplinary styles.

The second purpose of the present study was to investigate the interactive effects of maternal employment status and maternal disciplinary styles on children's peer status. Based on past research findings indicating positive relations between maternal induction and peer status, (e.g., Hart, et al. in press), if it is the case that maternal employment is related to maternal induction as some studies suggest, then we would expect that children of full- time and part- time employed mothers would be more

liked and less rejected by their peers when compared to children of part-time and nonemployed mothers. If, as other studies suggest, there is no relationship between maternal employment and maternal disciplinary styles, then exploratory analyses will be conducted to assess interaction effects of child sex, age, maternal employment status, and parenting styles on measures of children's peer status. In accordance with past research findings, it was expected that maternal employment by itself would not be related to child competence with peers (see Berndt, 1983).

Several procedures were used to gather data for this investigation. Full-time, part-time, and nonemployed mothers were interviewed in their homes prior to the beginning of school in the fall concerning the disciplinary strategies that they use. Sociometric testing was then conducted after children entered school to assess their peer status. Socioeconomic status (SES) data was also collected and used in subsequent analyses due to literature indicating effects on both parental disciplinary styles and peer status (e.g., Hartup, 1970; 1983; Hoffman, 1982).

Method

Sample

The sample for this study was part of a larger investigation of relationships between maternal disciplinary styles, children's outcome expectations, and children's peer status (Hart, Ladd, & Burleson, in press). The subjects were 144 first- (age range = 70-86 months) and fourth- (116-129 months) grade children attending two midwestern elementary schools and their mothers. There were 59 first graders (42 boys and 17 girls) and 85 fourth graders (45 boys and 40 girls). The sample was recruited by sending letters and permission forms to the parents of 260 first- and fourth- graders in the two midwestern elementary schools. An

additional 70 children were allowed by their parents to participate in classroom but not home interviews, and 46 parents declined to allow themselves or their children to participate. Based on parent questionnaire data, children and parents in the sample were found to be predominantly white and heterogenous with regard to socio-economic status (SES) as assessed by the Hollingshead (1975) four-factor index (with a possible range of 8-66). The sample's socioeconomic status scores ranged from 9 to 66 with a mean of 43 and a standard deviation of 12.58 (cf. Gottfried, 1985). Eighty- three percent of the sample was composed of two-parent families.

For the first-grade sample, 15 of the mothers were unemployed, 15 were employed part-time, and 29 were employed full-time. The fourth-grade sample was composed of 22 unemployed mothers, 30 part-time, and 33 full-time employed mothers.

Instruments and Procedures

Family information checklist. A paper- and- pencil measure was completed by mothers during the home visits. Respondents were asked to read each item on the family information checklist, inspect the available response alternatives, and mark the best reply. Checklist items included information on family type (i.e., single or two-parent), educational level of both mother and father (i.e., years of schooling), and the type of occupation both husband and wife were engaged in. These items were used to construct the measure of SES based on guidelines set forth by Hollingshead (1975). Mothers were also asked to check whether they were employed full-time (at least 35 hours per week; part-time (between 5 and 34 hours per week), or not at all. Hours determining full- and part- time employment were based on criteria established by the U. S. census.

Home disciplinary style interview. Mothers were interviewed by the

principle investigator in their homes over the summer prior to their children's entrance into the first and fourth grades. Mothers were asked in individual tape-recorded interviews to respond to six hypothetical situations that were adapted from those developed by Bearison and Cassel (1975) and Applegate, Burke, Burleson, Delia, & Kline (1985). Before data collection began, twenty mothers of first- and fourth- graders, comprizing a separate sample, were pretested using these hypothetical situations to ensure that they were appropriate for both age groups.

The situations used in the interview described disciplinary contexts where their child: (a) hurt the feelings of another child by name-calling; (b) pushed another child to the ground who had accidentally run into him or her; (c) took a small item from their friend's house without asaking for it; (d) grabbed a toy away from another child while they were playing together; (e) refused to go to bed at bedtime on a school night; and (f) refused to go to school on a particular day. Rather than using a checklist of preformulated disciplinary strategies, mothers' open-ended responses to these situations were elicited so as to avoid the possibility of item desirability bias (cf. Burleson et al., 1988a; 1988b).

Disciplinary style measure. Based on the suggestions of several researchers regarding the need to elaborate the power assertion-induction dichotomy into a comprehensive continuum that captures varying shades or degrees of these contrasting disciplinary styles (Applegate et al., 1985; Burleson, 1984), an extensive hierarchical coding scheme was modified for use in this study (see Applegate et al., 1985). Maternal inductive oriented reasoning responses comprised the upper end of the continuum and power-assertive oriented responses comprised the lower end. The hierarchical placement of other types of responses (e.g., those that

included combinations of inductive and power assertive components) were made within the framework of theoretical or empirical justifications (cf. Applegate et al., 1985, Hoffman, 1982). A detailed coding booklet will be provided on request.

Researchers have often viewed hierarchically ordered coding systems as being similar to Guttman scales, in that the use of a particular strategy level implies the capacity to use all strategy levels lower on the hierarchy. Previous research using hierarchically ordered coding schemes in varying content areas (cf. Applegate, 1980; Burleson, 1984) have demonstrated that a person capable of using a high-level strategy might also suggest lower level strategies when asked for other ways that they might deal with the situation. Although reversion to the use of lower level strategies is a possibility, the converse does not appear to be true (cf. Applegate, 1980; Burleson, 1984).

Since a subject's response to stimulus situations may contain multiple disciplinary strategies codable within different hierarchical levels, most research has focused on the highest level strategy used in responding to the situation. As Loevinger and Wessler (1970) suggest, the highest-level scoring algorithm is appropriate when the characteristic being studied is viewed primarily as capacity (i.e., parental highest-level strategy implies the capability to use that strategy as well as lower-level strategies). Therefore, the highest level strategy elicited from mothers for each situation was selected for use in creating scores that were used in subsequent analyses. These scores (ranging from 1 to 6 for each situation) were created by summing the highest level strategies elicited for each of the six situations. Maternal disciplinary style scores for the sample ranged from 6 to 32 with a mean of 20.2 and a standard deviation of 5.86.

Two coders were trained to reliably unitize the text and to code the

maternal responses from interview transcripts. Twenty percent of the transcripts were duplicated and randomly inserted in each coding packet to provide a means of assessing reliability. Reliability on the coding units, or unitization of the transcripts, was assessed by using Guetzkow's Index (Guetzkow, 1950). This index is based on the premise that two independent, equally skilled coders unitize a text each into the same specifiable number of segments representing relevant disciplinary idea units. Analyses using this index indicated that there was a discrepency of only 12.2 % between the coders and the best estimate of the true number of units (the average of the two coders' estimates). Cohen's Kappa (Cohen, 1960) for the highest level response codes was .86. Cronbach's coefficient alpha, assessing cross- situational consistency in highest level strategy use, was .75 for the six regulative situations.

Sociometric Assessment. Sociometric testing procedures were employed in children's classrooms by four female undergraduate students 6-7 weeks after children began school. Procedures outlined by Cole, Dodge, and Coppotelli (1982); Singleton and Asher (1977); and Asher, Singleton, Tinsley, and Hymel (1979) were closely followed. Due to differences in reading ability levels, picture board peer nomination and rating scale procedures were followed for first graders while peer nomination and rating scale questionaire methodology was used for fourth graders.

First-grade children were initially shown a board containing classmates' photographs and were asked to name each peer. The order of the photos was randomized over subjects. Peer ratings were obtained by first training children to sort familiar objects according to preference. Once children demonstrated an understanding of the rating procedure, they sorted photographs of classmates using the criteria "children you like to play

with a lot," "children you sort of like to play with," and "children you don't like to play with." Peer nominations were gathered by asking children to name and point to individual photographs and select up to three liked classmates and three disliked classmates (cf. Asher, et al., 1979)

Peer ratings were obtained from fourth-grade children in a similar manner. However, instead of using photographs, children rated each classmate on a 5-point scale with five faces ranging from smiling to frowning depicting the meaning of numbers representing how much they liked to play with each at school. The rating scale questionnnaire consisted of a class roster of all children's names presented in counterbalanced order (cf. Singleton & Asher, 1977). Peer nominations were gathered by asking children to circle the names of up to three liked and three disliked classmates presented on two class rosters--one for "children I especially like to play with" and the other for "children I do not like to play with very much" (cf. Coie, et al., 1982) For both first-and fourth-graders, the order of the presentations of the nomination and rating measures were counterbalanced between each class except that the positive and negative nomination measures were presented consecutively.

Sociometric Measures. Separate positive and negative nomination scores were created by summing the "votes" children received for each criterion. Each of these scores (i.e., average ratings, number of positive nominations, and number of negative nominations) were then standardized within classrooms to construct the following measures: (a) peer liking/acceptance (positive nominations); (b) peer disliking/rejection (negative nominations); and (c) group acceptance (average ratings). Standardized positive nominations (p) and negative nominations (n) received by each child were then used to create two additional measures of social preference ($Z_p - Z_n$) and social impact ($Z_p + Z_n$) (cf. Coie & Dodge, 1983,

Coie, Dodge, & Coppetelli, 1982; Newcomb & Bukowski, 1983; Peery, 1979).

Results

Data Reduction and Analysis

In order to reduce the number of sociometric measures used in subsequent analyses and to eliminate redundancy among these variables, a principle components analysis was performed. The purpose of this procedure was to identify a minimum number of possibly unrelated measures that would account for a maximum amount of the variation in a larger set of variables. Varimax rotation was employed since measures loading on any resulting factors were to be used as separate dependent measures (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983). The group-acceptance, peer-liking, peer-preference, and peer-rejection measures were found to load well on a single factor (i.e., factor loadings ranging from .85 to .88) and to account for most of the total variation (92%) in the peer status measures. Since these measures appear to be tapping into the same construct, the peer liking and peer rejection measures were retained as dependent variables (reflecting opposite aspects of popularity) to achieve parsimony in subsequent analyses. Accordingly, the other measures were eliminated from further analyses.

Maternal employment and maternal disciplinary styles. Differences in maternal disciplinary styles were examined with a 2(sex) X 2(grade) X 3(employment status) factorial analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), in which maternal disciplinary style scores were used as variates and SES scores served as a covariate. The regression approach was used to control for unequal cell sizes. Post hoc tests (simple effects, LSD procedure--exact for unequal group sizes) were used to disaantle interactions and analyze mean differences.

Results revealed significant main effects for sex, $F(1,131) = 8.58$, $p < .01$ and for grade $F(1,131) = 3.75$, $p < .05$. Means indicated that mothers tended to be more inductive with boys ($M = 21.39$, $SD = 6.61$) than with girls ($M = 18.46$, $SD = 5.37$). Mothers also tended to be more inductive with older ($M = 20.82$, $SD = 5.67$) than with younger children ($M = 17.69$, $SD = 6.41$).

A significant sex by grade by employment status interaction also emerged from this analysis $F(2,131) = 3.76$, $p < .05$. Results of post hoc tests revealed that mothers who were employed full-time tended to be less inductive (i.e., more power-assertive) with first- grade boys than were part- time and nonemployed mothers of first- grade boys (see table 1). No significant differences in this regard were found between part- time and nonemployed mothers or for other groupings shown in table 1.

Insert table 1 here

Maternal employment, maternal disciplinary styles, and peer status. Since the first set of analyses were not entirely supportive of original hypotheses (specifically with regard to first-grade boys), exploratory analyses were conducted to assess main and interactive effects of sex, grade, employment status, and disciplinary styles on the peer status measures. For these analyses, a median split was performed on the parenting style measure. The high group was designated as the more inductive group and the low group was designated as the more power-assertive group. A 2(sex) X 2(grade) X 3(employment status) X 2(disciplinary style) multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was performed on the peer liking and peer rejection scores. Again, SES scores served as a covariate and post hoc tests (simple effects, LSD procedure)

were used to dismantle interactions and analyze mean differences.

A significant disciplinary style effect was obtained in the overall MANCOVA using Wilk's lambda as the criterion, $F(2,119) = 7.18$, $p < .001$., and in subsequent univariate analyses performed on the peer liking, $F(1,120) = 6.21$, $p < .01$, and peer rejection scores, $F(1,120) = 7.30$, $p < .01$. Examination of mean differences revealed that children of more inductive mothers (i.e., less power assertive) were more liked ($M = .38$, $SD = 1.08$) than children of less inductive mothers ($M = -.42$, $SD = 1.34$). Conversely, children of less inductive mothers (i.e., more power assertive) were more rejected ($M = .91$, $SD = 1.80$) than children of more inductive mothers ($M = -.38$, $SD = .80$).

Results also revealed a significant sex by employment status by parenting style interaction in both the multivariate analysis, $F(4,238) = 3.37$, $p < .01$, and in univariate analyses performed on the peer liking, $F(2,120) = 3.28$, $p < .01$, and the peer rejection scores, $F(2,120) = 4.43$, $p < .05$. Results of post hoc tests indicated that full-time employed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have both first- and fourth- grade boys who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared with boys of more power-assertive part-time and nonemployed mothers (see table 2).

Insert table 2 here

Conversely, nonemployed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have girls who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared to daughters of more power-assertive part-time and full-time employed mothers (see table 2). No significant differences in peer status scores emerged between part-time and nonemployed mothers in any of these instances although mean scores shown in table 2 generally indicate

increasing and decreasing peer status scores depending on maternal employment status and the sex of the child. Also, no significant differences in peer status scores emerged for more inductive nonemployed, part-time employed and full-time employed mothers.

Discussion

We began this investigation with the hypothesis that full- time and part- time employed mothers would be more inductive than nonemployed mothers, and that their children would be more liked and less rejected by their peers. For the most part, no differences in disciplinary styles were found as a function of maternal employment status. Surprisingly, however, full-time employed mothers of first- grade boys were found to be less inductive (i.e., more power assertive) when compared to part- time and nonemployed mothers. Although these data do not provide an explanation for this finding, one possibility may be that younger boys are more active and demanding than daughters of this age group and older children. Alvarez (1985) found that full-time employed mothers were more prone to couch their preschool- age sons' activity in negative terms and to describe their sons as being more demanding and noncompliant when compared to part-time and non-employed mothers. Such tendencies of younger boys may preclude full-time employed mothers (who are already under excessive strain from juggling two roles) from having the time, energy, and patience to be more inductive in response to the demands of their sons (cf. Hoffman, 1982).

As expected, maternal employment factors were not found to be directly related to children's peer status. However, findings suggest that maternal employment factors may work in combination with disciplinary styles to produce differential effects for boys and girls. Our data reveal that full- time employed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have

boys who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared to more power-assertive part-time and nonemployed mothers. Conversely, nonemployed mothers who were more power-assertive tended to have girls who were less liked and more rejected by their peers when compared to girls of more power-assertive part-time and full-time employed mothers.

Although a conclusive explanation of these findings is beyond the scope of this study, findings pertaining to girls of nonemployed mothers may be due to a modeling effect. In light of recent research, children of more power assertive mothers have greater tendencies to emulate more power assertive cognitions and behavior in interactions with peers that may contribute to peer rejection (cf. Hart, et al., in press, Putallaz, 1987). This effect for girls may be compounded by mothers who stay at home (as same sex role models) since their daughters have more exposure to power-assertive interactions than do daughters of part- time and full- time employed mothers.

Why then, are boys of more power- assertive full-time employed mothers less liked and more rejected than boys of more power- assertive part- time and nonemployed mothers? For first grade boys, this may be due to the fact that their full- time employed mothers are indeed more power-assertive than part- time and nonemployed mothers. However, little explanation can be offered for these findings pertaining to fourth- grade boys.

Additional findings from this study suggest that mothers tend to be more inductive with older than with younger children. This finding should not be surprizing due to the fact that older children are more self-sufficient and independent, thus requiring less coercion in day- to- day regulatory situations. Somewhat less expected were findings suggesting that mothers are more inductive with boys than with girls. Perhaps this is

due to greater pressure for boys to be more independent, resulting in mothers feeling the need to talk things over more with their sons to ensure greater self- guided independence. Finally, and supportive of past research, mothers who were more inductive were found to have children who were more liked and less rejected by their peers.

In conclusion, findings from our study suggest that maternal employment status interacts with maternal disciplinary styles in ways that are related to children's competence with peers. The major thrust of the findings of this investigation suggest that mothers who are employed full-time and who are more power-assertive in their disciplinary styles may be putting their boys at risk for peer rejection. These findings seem congruent with the notion that full-time maternal employment may compound the undersocialization of sons (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). The same appears to be the case for more power-assertive mothers who stay at home with their daughters.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Parenting Styles as a Function of Maternal Employment Status

	Grade 1						Grade 4					
	Males			Females			Males			Females		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
NON	10	22.89	(5.99)	5	18.60	(6.07)	13	20.38	(5.45)	9	19.71	(6.47)
PART	8	23.29	(8.50)	7	16.14	(4.81)	16	22.69	(5.36)	14	20.07	(4.43)
FULL	24	16.35	(4.87)	5	17.40	(4.22)	16	22.75	(5.99)	17	18.89	(6.08)

Note. NON = Nonemployed; PART = Part-time employed; FULL = Full-time employed

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Peer Status Scores as a Function of Maternal Employment Status and Maternal Power Assertion

	Peer Rejection						Peer Liking					
	Males			Females			Males			Females		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
NON	11	0.06	(1.38)	9	1.76	(1.75)	11	-0.29	(0.93)	9	-1.04	(0.43)
PART	10	0.60	(1.25)	11	0.57	(1.36)	10	-0.50	(1.03)	11	0.07	(0.91)
FULL	19	1.53	(1.27)	12	0.19	(0.97)	19	-1.59	(1.51)	12	-0.06	(0.97)

Note. NON = Nonemployed power-assertive; PART = Part-time employed power-assertive; FULL = Full-time employed power-assertive